



**WORLD DAY
OF THE SICK 2021**

UNITED
In Prayer

WITH & FOR OUR SICK

**"You have but one teacher
but you are all brothers" Mt 23:8**

**CATHEDRAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
PENANG**

**Mass in Commemoration
Sunday, Feb 7, 2021**



WORLD DAY OF THE SICK 2021

February 11 is World Day of the Sick, an observation started by Pope John Paul II as a way for believers to offer prayers for those suffering from illnesses. The day coincides with the commemoration of Our Lady of Lourdes.

In his message for the 29th World Day of the Sick on February 11, Pope Francis urges a path of healing grounded in a trusting and interpersonal relationship between the sick and those who care for them. "A society is all the more human to the degree that it cares effectively for its most frail

and suffering members, in a spirit of fraternal love."

Jesus asks us to "stop and listen, to establish a direct and personal relationship with others, to feel empathy and compassion, and to let their suffering become our own as we seek to serve them,"

"You have but one teacher but you are all brothers".. Mt 23:8

A trust-based relationship to guide care for the sick

"Such closeness is a precious balm that provides support and consolation to the sick in their suffering. As Christians we experience that closeness as a sign of the love of Jesus Christ, the Good Samaritan, who draws near with compassion to every man and woman wounded by sin"

ABOUT THE WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

Initiated in 1992 to encourage people to pray for those who suffer from illness and for their caregivers.

World Day of the Sick was first observed on February 11, 1993. This day is also the Catholic Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, which is a name is given to the Virgin Mary in honor of the apparitions that were said to have been seen in and around Lourdes, France, by a young girl called Bernadette Soubirous. The Church canonized Bernadette as a saint several years later.

World Day of the Sick has availed world wide observance every year since its inception.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH PRIESTS

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In recent times we have been made aware more acutely of the sufferings and pains that surround us. The pandemic too has caused hardships and distress which has been detrimental to the health and well-being of so many of us around the world. More often than not those of us who are sick may sometimes feel neglected and may see ourselves as burdensome to others.

The church continues to uphold and emphasize the value of each person as children of God, deeply loved and closely cared for by Him. For us who are sick and who are care givers, recognize that we are blessed in a special way to share the privilege in uniting ourselves with the sufferings of Christ, as we embrace our sufferings with His on the cross.

In prayerful solidarity, let us pray for one another as we remain assured by His unconditional love for us in and through our sufferings. ***"Don't fear, because I am with you; don't be afraid, I am Your God. I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you with my righteous strong hand" - (Isaiah 41:10)***

*United in prayer,
Fr Francis Anthony
& Fr Joachim Robert*

OPENING PRAYER

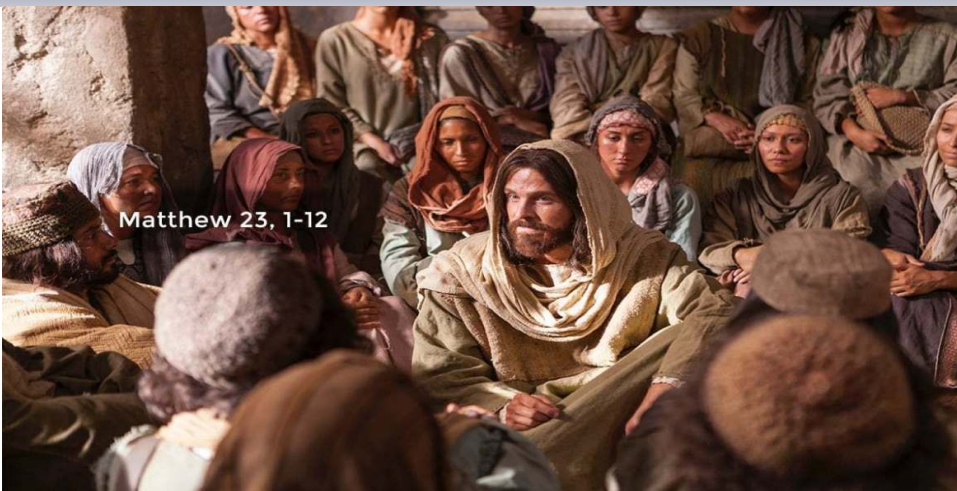
**In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

God of Restoration, we set before you today the frailty of our humanity. Each of us gathered here lives with the experience, the memory, the fear, and the heartache of sickness, of pain and suffering.

Through a loved one or a classmate, a friend or a coworker, a stranger or our very selves, we have all witnessed the limitations of the body. And yet, O Lord, in these experiences of malady, weariness and illness, we witness even more the resilience of our human spirit and the heartfelt compassion you enable us to provide one another.

As we begin our prayer today, let us take a silent moment to hold in our hearts those who struggle with sickness and those who care for them. Bless these, your children, and give us the strength to support them. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF JESUS ACCORDING TO MATTHEW



Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens (hard to carry) and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.' As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

The Gospel of the Lord

Response : Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

OPENING HYMN :

BE THOU MY VISION

Be Thou my vision,
O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me,
save that Thou art
Thou my best thought
by day or by night
Waking or sleeping,
Thy presence my light

Be Thou my wisdom,
and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and
Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father,
I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling
And I with Thee one

Be Thou my battle shield,
sword for my fight
Be Thou my dignity,
Thou my delight
Thou my soul's shelter,
Thou my high tow'r
Raise Thou my heav'nward
O pow'r of my pow'r

Riches I heed not,
Nor e'n empty praise
Thou mine inheritance,
Now and always
Thou and Thou only,
First in my heart
High King of heaven
My treasure Thou art

High King of heaven,
My vict'ry won
May I reach heaven's joys,
O bright heav'n's Son!
Heart of my own heart,
Whatever befall
Still be my vision.
O Ruler of all.

REFLECTIONS

Jesus criticizes the hypocrisy of those who fail to practise what they preach. When our faith is reduced to empty words, unconcerned with the lives and needs of others, the creed we profess proves inconsistent with the life we lead. The danger is real. That is why Jesus uses strong language about the peril of falling into self-idolatry. He tells us: **“You have but one teacher and you are all brothers”**.

He calls out those who “preach but do not practise” which includes us, since none of us is immune to the grave evil of hypocrisy, which prevents us from flourishing as children of the one Father, called to live universal fraternity.

Before the needs of our brothers and sisters, Jesus asks us to respond in a way completely contrary to such hypocrisy. He asks us to stop and listen, to establish a direct and personal relationship with others, to feel empathy and compassion, and to let their suffering become our own as we seek to serve them (cf. *Lk 10:30-35*).

... Pope Francis’s *Msg 29th World Day of the Sick*

Choose To Have a HOPE—FILLED HEART!!!

Take time to pause, reflect and rejuvenate by reading Scripture—encouraging words and a prayer starter to begin a dialogue with God.

“God, the one and only—I’ll wait as long as he says, Everything I hope for comes from him, so why not?”

He is solid rock under my feet, breathing room for my soul... I am set for life

... *Psalm 62:5*

RELEASING THE HOLD ON ANXIETIES

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting

Psalm 139:23-24

Lord, take from me my anxieties, big and small. May I remember to give these to You daily so that I will not find myself distracted by the things of this world.

Amen

HE IS ROCK SOLID!

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who build his house on the rock. The rains came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall because it had its foundation on the rock”

Mt 7:24-25

Lord, help me build my foundation today upon You so I can remain steadfast in the storms of my life.

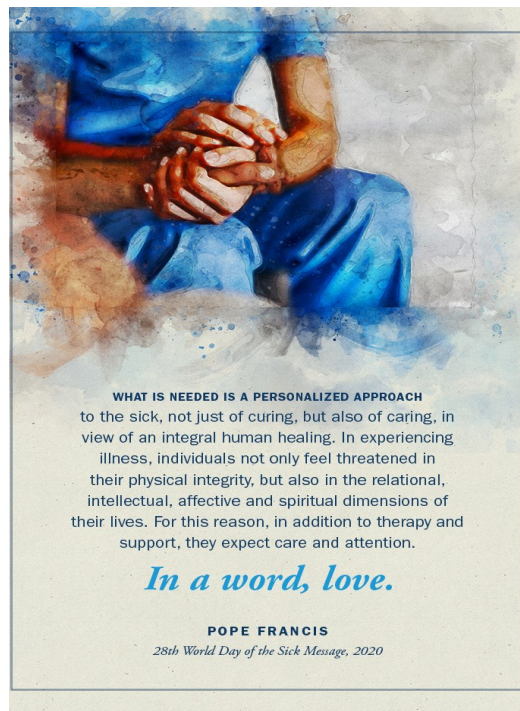
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Let our Response be - Lord God, Protect Them

We pray ...

- * For all in direct patient care, care-givers and family members of the sick, give them strength for their service and strength to ask for help when they are in need.
- * For all the sick; bring them to full health and restore them to those who love them.
- * For all those isolated in their homes; sustain them in joy and peace.
- * For all those who have died and those who grieve their loss in isolation; comfort them in their sorrow.
- * For decision-makers at all levels; send them your wisdom and good counsel to serve their communities.

We pray in faith, hope and trust, through Jesus Christ. Amen.



“Sickness makes us realize our own vulnerability and our innate need of others. It makes us feel more clearly that we are creatures dependant on God.... Sickness raises the question of life’s meaning which we bring before God in faith” .. Pope Francis

TAKE COMFORT ON HIS PROMISES

When lonely and fearful, remember His promise in Jeremiah 33:3—***“Call to me and I will answer you; I will tell you great secrets of which you know nothing”.***

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When trials and tribulations seem unsurmountable be assured of His promise to us in Joshua 1:9—***“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord, your God will be with you wherever you go.”***

GOD HAS A PLAN & REVEALS TO THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM

In spite of challenges one faces, God still has a plan for to each one of us to help in the building of His kingdom as in Jeremiah 29:11—***“I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*** Trust in His wisdom and plan for your life, even today, even in your circumstance, you are in a position to glorify His name.

The story of Job calls all to trust in the Lord humbly. Job’s wife and friends do not accompany him in his misfortune; instead, they blame him and only aggravate his solitude and distress. Job feels forlorn and misunderstood. Yet for all his extreme frailty, he rejects hypocrisy and chooses the path of honesty towards God and others. He cries out to God so insistently that God finally answers him and allows him to glimpse a new horizon. He confirms that Job’s suffering is not a punishment or a state of separation from God, much less as sign of God’s indifference. Job’s heart, wounded and healed, then makes this vibrant and touching confession to the Lord: ***“I had heard of you by word of mouth, but now my eye has seen you”*** (Job 42:5).

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, He speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” - C.S. Lewis in *The Problem of Pain*



ST PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE COLOSSIANS

Here are 4 things from St Paul's prayers on behalf of the Colossians in times of suffering:

1. **Pray with a focus on God.** "... asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Challenge: Instead of only praying for God to remove your "thorn," pray that God will fill you with His wisdom and understanding, that you will grow in His likeness and that you will please the Lord and bear fruit for His Kingdom in the midst of your suffering. Boldly pray that regardless of your circumstances, you will be greatly satisfied in God.

2. **Pray with a focus on others.** "And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you."; "May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy..."

Challenge: Instead of only praying for your own needs, intentionally choose to lift up those in your life who need to be strengthened by God's power so that they can endure and have patience with joy in their suffering (and then encourage them by letting them know that you are praying for them!). Being others-focused often gives us needed perspective and the opportunity to comfort others with the comfort we ourselves have received from God (2 Cor. 1:4).

3. **Pray with a focus on the gospel.** "Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth..."

Challenge: As a Christ-follower in times of suffering, pray with confidence with your heart set on the truth of the gospel – remembering Christ's sacrifice and victory over death, the grace in which you now stand (Rom. 5:2), and the fact that your present sufferings do not compare with the glory that will be revealed to you (Rom. 8:18). What an opportunity for the world to see the hope of the gospel lived out through you!

4. **Pray with a focus on thanksgiving.** "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you..."; "giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."

Challenge: Count your blessings – audibly naming them back to the Father in your prayers – and watch your momentary afflictions fade away in the light of His glory and grace.



Colossians 1 finds Paul under house arrest in Rome, writing to believers in the small city of Colosse. *Life was certainly far from perfect.* While Paul was awaiting trial in hopes of gaining his physical freedom, the Colossians were facing constant pressure from false teachers who were trying to shake the very foundation of their faith.

Along with these most current hardships, we also know that Paul is living with his perpetual thorn in his flesh ([2 Cor. 12](#)), and that he has already suffered severely for the cause of Christ leading up to this time (you can read a humbling summary in [2 Cor. 11](#)).

Though we each have a different story to tell, hardships often rise to the surface of our lives and land us at the feet of Jesus where we find ourselves begging for His intervention and grace.

Take heart that you have landed at the right place!!!!

But when we're tied up in the weight of our every day personal battles, we sometimes lose sight of the bigger picture of God's heart for the world.

Paul's exemplary prayers helps us to remained fixed on the heart of God even in the midst of extreme hardship.

PRAYER FOR THE CARE GIVER

God, grant me the tender, open-hearted love needed on the caregiving journey, the strength of body, serenity of mind, clarity of purpose and willingness of spirit to meet the extraordinary, everyday constant changes and challenges of caregiving with a smile and good cheer.

Grant me the compassion and courage to choose the right path, making the best choices for the highest good of my loved ones, my family and myself.

Let me seek, find and accept help and loving support from family, friends, community, professionals for this journey of caring.

Let my loved ones receive the gift of love from my heart and hands with gratitude and healing always according to Your will. Through the most holy name of Jesus. Amen



“Serving means caring ... for the vulnerable of our families, our society, our people. In this outreach, all are “called to set aside their own wishes and desires, their pursuit of power, before the concrete gaze of those who are most vulnerable... Pope Francis

HYMN OF HOPE & HEALING

HE WILL HOLD ME FAST

When I fear my faith will fail
Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail,
He will hold me fast;
I could never keep my hold t
through life’s fearful path;
For my love is often cold;
He must hold me fast

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so,
He will hold me fast

Those He saves are His delight;
Christ will hold me fast
He’ll not let my soul be lost;
His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost;
He will hold me fast

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so,
He will hold me fast

For my life He bled and died;
Christ will hold me fast
Justice has been satisfied;
He will hold me fast
Raised with Him to endless life,
He will hold me fast
Till our faith is turned to sight;
When He comes at last!

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so,
He will hold me fast



FEAST OF MARY, OUR LADY OF LOURDES

On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in the apostolic constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*. A little more than three years later, on February 11, 1858, a young lady appeared to Bernadette Soubirous. This began a series of visions. During the apparition on March 25, the lady identified herself with the words: "I am the Immaculate Conception."

Bernadette was a sickly child of poor parents. Their practice of the Catholic faith was scarcely more than lukewarm. Bernadette could pray the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Creed. She also knew the prayer of the Miraculous Medal: "O Mary conceived without sin."

During interrogations Bernadette gave an account of what she saw. It was "something white in the shape of a girl." She used the word *aquero*, a dialect term meaning "this thing." It was "a pretty young girl with a rosary over her arm." Her white robe was encircled by a blue girdle. She wore a white veil. There was a yellow rose on each foot. A rosary was in her hand. Bernadette was also impressed by the fact that the lady did not use the informal form of address (*tu*), but the polite form (*vous*). The humble virgin appeared to a humble girl and treated her with dignity.

Through that humble girl, Mary revitalized and continues to revitalize the faith of millions of people. People began to flock to Lourdes from other parts of France and from all over the world. In 1862 Church authorities confirmed the authenticity of the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes for the diocese. The Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes became worldwide in 1907.

*In Closing
Let Us Pray together...*



*Blessed be the Holy and Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Our Lady of
Lourdes, pray for us. Mother, have mercy on us. Our Lady of
Lourdes, heal us for the greater glory of the Holy Trinity. Our
Lady of Lourdes, heal us for the greater glory of Our Lord Jesus
Christ. Our Lady of Lourdes, heal the sick, convert sinners.
Health of the sick, Help of the suffering, pray for us. Mary,
conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse in thee.
St. Bernadette, pray for us! Amen*